

At the Library

The Boone County Library has been buzzing with activity and excitement lately. In addition to hosting the multimedia educational road show of galactic proportions, **Visions of the Universe: Four Centuries of Discovery**, the library has also featured several guest speakers from the Arkansas Center for Space and Planetary Sciences at the University of Arkansas to talk about their area of expertise in the field of astronomy. In conjunction with the celebration of Galileo's first gaze into space with a telescope, several other events have been planned as well.

The first guest speaker, on January 21, was David Blackburn, a native of Arkansas and a third-year Ph.D. candidate in Space and Planetary Sciences at the University of Arkansas. Mr. Blackburn is researching the moons of the outer solar system and planetary ices. His presentation was entitled **Recent Discoveries on the Icy Satellites of Saturn**.

In his presentation, Mr. Blackburn focused on the moons of Saturn and the remarkable discoveries made recently by the Cassini spacecraft currently orbiting Saturn. On Titan, Cassini has discovered lakes of liquid methane and ethane at both poles, making Titan the only other planetary body besides Earth in our solar system known to have liquid on its surface. On another moon composed mostly of ice, Enceladus has active plumes of liquid and ice that are ejected from the south pole from warm, linear geologic features called the Tiger Stripes, providing evidence for a liquid water reservoir under the surface. Iapetus is a Yin-yang moon with respect to brightness, having an extremely dark hemisphere and a light hemisphere, and this difference creates a dichotomy of surface temperature that feeds volatile transport of carbon dioxide and water vapor producing an ever-changing surface. Other smaller moons of Saturn including Mimas, Dione and Tethys are also suspected to be active worlds, and Mr. Blackburn will be delving into the mysteries of these saturnian moons in an attempt to unlock their secrets.

On January 26 and February 10 Dr. Joel Berrier gave a presentation for children in grades K-6. It consisted of a brief tour of the solar system and examined our sun, the planets in our solar system and our moon. Dr. Berrier demonstrated to the children how the phases of the moon are created. Dr. Berrier holds a Ph.D. in Physics and Astronomy from the University of California, Irvine.

Dr. Larry Roe, Director of the Center for Space and Planetary Sciences at the University of Arkansas, presented the last talk in the series on February 4 at the library. In his address, he talked about careers in the space program. He explained how career opportunities in the aerospace field may be found with government entities, private corporations and universities. Government agencies such as NASA, NOAA and the Department of Defense use, operate, and on occasion, design and build spacecraft. Corporations, however, build the great majority of U.S. spacecraft and their components. They also operate most U.S. satellites in Earth's orbit. Universities conduct basic research, analyze data, design advanced components and frequently build novel instruments for exploratory spacecraft. Dr. Roe has worked for government, university and corporate aerospace organizations.

* **Astronomy Field Trip - March 5 - exact time and place to be announced.**

Have you ever seen Saturn or Mars through a high powered telescope? Mr. Sam Medley, local amateur astronomer, will bring his telescope, you bring a thermos of hot cocoa, dress warmly and we will meet together and gaze into the night sky to view parts of our galaxy. Check <http://bcl.state.state.ar.us> or call the library at 741-5913 for info.

* **Winter Reading Program - To April 10**

Trek across the universe with Boone County Library, Enterprise. See page 4 for more details.

* **My Vision of the Universe Community Quilt Contest** - Please see page 3.

* **The Lyric Theater** - \$1.00 "far out" space movie nights. Go to <http://www.thelyricharrison.org> for times and dates.